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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 151321Z DEC 06
FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8283
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 8123
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0076
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0038
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0010
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 0052
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 001426

SIPDIS

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DEPT PASS TO EX-IM KVRANICH AND BUBAMADU
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
USDOC FOR 3317/ITA/OA/KBURRESS
PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAGR ENRG PGOV ECON EFIS EINV AA NI

SUBJECT: AQUACULTURE & TIMBER: DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN
CROSS RIVER STATE

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¶1. Summary: Aquaculture, agriculture, and timber offer sustainable economic development opportunities in Cross River State. There are currently 100 fish farms in the state and the Institute of Oceanography and Marine Sciences (IOMS) at the University of Calabar is promoting aquaculture as a way to provide income and improve protein consumption. The Federal and State governments are supporting community forestry in 70 communities. Obudu Cattle Ranch will expand meat and dairy production for the state's internal market.
End Summary.

Opportunities in Aquaculture, Sustainable Fisheries

¶2. On November 15, Pol-Econ Chief and Poloff visited Cross River State and met the University of Calabar's Faculty of Agriculture, Wildlife, and Forestry to discuss economic development. Former Fulbright scholar and researcher at the Institute of Oceanography and Marine Sciences (IOMS) at the University of Calabar (U-C) Albert Ekanem said aquaculture can boost the state's economy and increase the protein consumption. He envisions the institute and the state becoming aquaculture centers of excellence.

¶3. Ekanem's research revealed an African plant remedy for a virulent aquaculture disease. This, he believes, will help Nigerian farmers' see fish farming as a way to earn a living. Ekanem said the institute is trying to build community capacity by exploring fish feed production, running a hatchery, and teaching farmers how to construct fish ponds. Ekanem said he would like to develop an institute to train and consult commercial fish farmers and to spread aquaculture throughout the Niger Delta.

¶4. Approximately 100 fish farms currently operate in Cross River State, Ekanem counted. The IOMS currently conducts workshops and seminars to teach communities how to farm African catfish and tilapia. The four most widely-consumed species in Cross River are Bonga, Croaker, Catfish and Tilapia. In the wild, these species are over-fished, Ekanem warned; over 20,000 tons of the affordable Bonga are taken

every year. IOMS plans to place nursery-hatched Bonga eggs in coastal waters, allowing them to drift to estuaries and mangroves and replenish stocks of wild fish. Ekanem said the institute has also proposed the establishment of a mangrove reserve which, if properly managed, could provide a breeding ground for fish to supply canning and other industries.

Opportunities in Sustainable Forestry

¶5. The Federal and State governments are supporting community forestry in approximately 70 Cross River communities, according to Dean Uche Amalu of U-C's Faculty of Agriculture, Wildlife, and Forestry. A bottom-up approach to sustainability which requires that communities plant three trees for every one harvested, gives communities a sense of ownership and responsibility, Amalu said. Sustainable biologically-diverse timber plantations are being evaluated as a possible source for commercial timber and non-timber products in Cross River. For example, teak can be used for furniture, plywood, and particle board while the use of Oku Boduku (a local tree) for pulp and paper newsprint products is also being explored. Non-timber crops such as avocado, African pear, and bush mango can also be integrated into timber plantations, Amalu advised, and generate income when sold for domestic and foreign consumption.

Obudu Cattle Ranch Improving Meat & Dairy Production

¶6. The Obudu cattle ranch, a well known mountain resort, is beginning to develop commercial livestock capabilities, Dean Amalu said. South Africa's Protea hotel chain which manages the ranch is designing a slaughter house as well as facilities for production of dairy products, Amalu reported. Amalu underscored that he is personally involved in expanding

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the market for Obudu dairy and meat products. Cross River is Nigeria's most politically stable state with an equitable distribution of roads and electricity, he lauded. As a result, it will be easy to distribute beef and dairy products produced at the ranch throughout the state, the Dean asserted.
BROWNE